COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Consistent with University and College expectations, the Department of Sociology has identified five main teaching objectives. One of those major teaching objectives for the Sociology B.S. degree is instruction in “the diversity of research methodologies that inform sociological analysis (e.g. experimental, survey, ethnography, discourse analysis, historical-comparative, etc.).”

This course is designed to satisfy the following program objectives:

- The training of researchers, data analysts, and skilled teachers who are capable of understanding and contributing to the sociological enterprise;
- Instruction in research methods, qualitative techniques, computing skills, and advanced statistical techniques that form the basis for much social science research;
- Learning to recognize important social issues, formulate research agendas to study these issues, and carry out data collection and analyses to answer central questions about these issues.

The course is designed to contribute to the following learning outcomes:

Upon completion of the major, graduates will be able to collect and manage social science data including coding quantitative data, qualitative data, and implementing proper sampling techniques. Graduates are expected to “know the full range of methodologies, the basic epistemological assumptions associated with each, the criteria for evaluating quality research, and how to select and implement the appropriate method to test a hypothesis or address a research question.”

My main goal in this class is to help you learn the skills required for conducting high quality face-to-face, telephone, mail and e-mail surveys. This is the most useful (and best!) sociology class you will ever take. Like statistics, this class is different from the more substantive sociology classes in that there are right and wrong answers. By the end of the class you should be able to design quantitative research strategies that work well.

Students generally are good at being able to briefly describe how a survey should be done but have a very difficult time actually designing and implementing a survey. This course will provide you with a working knowledge of the research methodologies commonly used by sociologists, the basic epistemological assumptions associated with each methodology, the criteria for evaluating quality research and the criteria for selecting and implementing the appropriate method to test a hypothesis or address a research question.

This class is a prerequisite for a series of methodology and statistics courses in our major. The main emphasis of this class will be on the four standard survey research procedures with an introduction to experimental, evaluation and qualitative methodologies. As an introductory class, students are expected to master the basic principles and vocabulary associated with measurement, sampling, survey research design, experimental research, qualitative research and evaluation research. The key learning objectives for each topic area are attached.

In addition, students will learn to code and prepare quantitative data for statistical analysis. Students will master the basic descriptive statistics for measures of central tendency and variation in data. In preparation
for Soc 307, students will learn to work with large data files and develop a basic familiarity with the SPSS statistical package. Students will be introduced to the analytic processes associated with comparing data across categories. Finally, students will demonstrate their ability to summarize findings from a research project and create a written and oral presentation of their findings.

This course gives students significant hands-on experience with the basic procedures used in quantitative research.


You are also required to purchase a flash drive for use in the SPSS and Analysis Report assignments.

**ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE READING:**


**EXAMINATIONS:** There will be three examinations. Material from the text, assignments and class discussion will be included on the examinations.

**CLASS PROJECT:** The class will participate in the implementation of a telephone survey. More details about this project will be provided in class later in the semester.

**ANALYSIS REPORT:** Each student will be part of a research team that will complete a group analysis report on a sociological issue and present the group’s findings to the class.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Given that the lecture timetable varies by the level of class participation and the number of questions that need to be addressed, the description of assignments and projects and due dates will be provided in class as the lecture material progresses to that assignment topic.

**GRADES:**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>910 or more</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>880-909</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>800-859</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>580-599</td>
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<td>579 or less</td>
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Your course grade will be determined by the number of points you obtain. I expect every student to be an "A" student! A 910 or more C 700-759 A- 880-909 C- 680-699 (Any grade below C- does not count toward B+ 860-879 D+ 660-679 Sociology graduation requirements) B 800-859 D 600-659 B- 780-799 D- 580-599 C+ 760-779 F 579 or less

I reserve the right to change assignment due dates, test dates, class assignments and class policies if circumstances warrant. If I become ill, I may ask a TA to teach a class. TAs will be teaching SPSS during class periods.

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READING SCHEDULE:

We will be flexible in our class schedule to allow for discussion of topics of interest to the class. I expect each student to read the chapter by the assigned day and to come to class prepared to discuss the material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Science, Society, and Social Research</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Process and Problems of Social Research</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to SPSS</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Elementary Quantitative Data Analysis</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>* SPSS &amp; Statistics</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ethics in Research</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Conceptualization and Measurement</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Chapter 4 (cont) &amp; presentation example</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>* Chapter 5 (cont) &amp; SPSS</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td><strong>FIRST EXAM:</strong> Chapters 1-5, 8, lectures</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Causation and Experimental Design</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Chap 7 (cont)</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Monday Classes</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>* Chap 7 (cont)</td>
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<td>* Chap 7 (cont)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>SECOND EXAM</strong> (Chapters 5 (part) 6, 7, lectures)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Reviewing, Proposing, and Reporting Research</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Implementing panel studies</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>* Implementing panel studies &amp; team analysis reports</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods: Observing, Participating, Listening</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>* Chap 9 (cont) &amp; team analysis reports</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Evaluation Research &amp; team analysis reports</td>
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<td>* team analysis reports</td>
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<td>**** SPSS FINAL assignment due</td>
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<td><strong>FINAL EXAM:</strong> Implementing panel studies, Chapters 7 (part), 9, 11, 12 &amp; lectures</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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TEAM ANALYSIS REPORT (50 points)

Each team will be provided a codebook for a survey. Each team will pick a topic, complete a double spaced, 6 page written report on the topic (6 pages does not include the cover page or the appendix), and make a short presentation to the class (10 minute maximum). You will use your SPSS skills to create the data tables you need for your report. You will also make a PowerPoint presentation that summarizes your key findings.

Your written report must include the major headings 1-8 listed below. (3 points lost from total)

1. COVER PAGE (2 points)
   - Title of Report
   - Names of all participants

2. ABSTRACT (3 points)
   - Create a short summary of the key findings (300 words or less: title, short description of your study, significance of issue, statement of hypothesis being tested and major conclusions).

3. INTRODUCTION (5 points)
   - Select and describe a research problem or issue from the topics in the survey questionnaire
   - Defend salience of topic (why is it important?)

4. BACKGROUND (10 points)
   - Brief literature review - previous findings from other publications (you must research your topic!)
   - State a testable hypothesis (must state a relationship between at least two variables and use one control variable to check for a spurious relationship.)

5. RESEARCH METHODS (3 points)
   - Describe the population, sampling unit, sampling frame and sampling design
   - Describe each variable you used and, if applicable, how you recoded the variables.
   - Identify the level of measurement for each variable.

6. RESULTS (10 points)
   - Report the appropriate summary statistics for each variable you used (mode, median, mean, range and standard deviation)
   - Make neat, high quality graphs that summarize your findings
   - Describe your findings for your hypothesis. Describe what the data/chart tell you.

7. DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS (5 points)
   - Present your conclusions about your hypothesis. Was your hypothesis supported or was it wrong? Discuss the implications and limitations of your findings.

8. APPENDIX (5 points)
   - You must include references cited, a color “handout” copy of all slides used in your class presentation (6 slides per page), a copy of your SPSS command file, all cross-tabulation printouts you created and all worksheets/printouts of calculations you made from the printout data.

CLASS PRESENTATION: (7 points)
- Make up to a 6 minute, high quality presentation to class.
- Everyone on the team should contribute to the development of the presentation and make part of the class presentation
- In a high quality PowerPoint presentation briefly explain 1- 6 above. Focus most of your time on #3, #5 and #6.

IMPORTANT:
1. Turn in your written report (with appendix) right after your class presentation.
2. Include a handout copy of your slides from your PowerPoint presentation with your written report.
3. Return all copies of the original questionnaire. (failure to turn in written report right after your presentation = minus 10 points)
IMPORTANT CLASS NORMS:

I care about my students. I try to accommodate health and personal issues that come up. Unfortunately, students have begun to take excessive advantage of my flexibility. Given the growing number of students who seem to have forgotten the basic rules of courteous, classroom behavior, the following norms are expected in my class:

The classroom is completely full. Thus, personal computer use is NOT permitted in class unless you sit in the front row of the classroom. If you do use a computer it must be battery powered. Given past problems with students playing solitaire, watching movies, sending e-mails and surfing the web during class, personal computer use is NOT permitted in other areas of the classroom. I will note violations of this policy and deduct 15 points from a student’s total point total for each class period that they use a computer in non-designated areas. The point deduction will be noted on blackboard.

Disruptive behavior including leaving class early, coming to class late, cell phone interruption or use during class, and/or other disruptions (students who dominate class discussion or lecture with excessive comments/questions), private discussions on non-class topics with students seated next to you during class discussions and lectures, reading newspapers, etc.) will lower your participation grade.

Leaving class early (during a lecture/class presentation) is disruptive, discourteous and unacceptable behavior! If you know that you have to leave class early for a legitimate reason, you must check with me before class and let me know that you need to leave early. If you have a chronic health problem that you know may cause you to temporarily leave the classroom, please let me know. Unexcused exits from the classroom during a lecture or class project will result in 25 points being deducted from your grade total for each occurrence. I will not acknowledge a person leaving the class but I will note the person’s name, date, and time of the unexcused departure. The point deduction will be noted on blackboard. Please note: this norm does not apply to serious, unexpected health emergencies.

Class TAs. I have some of the best undergraduate TAs for this class. All of them are students who did exceptionally well in this class. (Note: I will be looking for the best students in this class to hire as TA’s and research assistants for next semester). In the past, many students came to my TAs expecting them to practically do assignments for them. While TAs are available to help guide you, they will not provide extensive assistance unless you have first made a significant effort to complete an assignment on your own. The experiential nature of this class requires exploration, work and creative thought on your part. TAs are available to help when you get stuck on an assignment. They are not personal tutors.

Note: if you use blackboard to email the TA, it goes to the head TA’s personal account and she will disregard it. Please be sure emails are sent to the correct address if you want to hear back. Emailing the head TA personally will not get your questions answered any sooner; it will probably actually take longer.

Class TA schedules. My TAs are usually in the office most of the day. Please remember that my TAs are students like you who have assignments, tests and even get sick. If you want to be guaranteed to have a TA in the office to answer questions, you need to email TAS.R.US@gmail.com and set up an appointment.

SPSS Training. A requirement of this class is that you develop a good, working knowledge of SPSS, a statistical computer package. For almost all of you, this will be a new skill that you must learn. There are two class periods where a significant amount of time will be spent on SPSS training. We will be taking an attendance roll in these SPSS training sessions. If you do not attend these training classes and do not have a previously approved excused absence from me, do not expect my TAs to personally teach you what was covered in the class that you missed. You must take personal responsibility for learning how to use SPSS as a significant part of the SPSS final assignment is an SPSS exercise that you will be required to do on your own.

Falsifying telephone interviews/mail surveys. Sociological knowledge is no better than the information that it is based on. Social policies that affect people’s lives are based on survey and interview data. If interviewers do not maintain the highest ethical standards, people’s lives can be hurt. Thus, attempting to falsify an interview is a serious breach of scientific ethics and a clear violation of the BYU honor code. We monitor and check interviews. Any dishonesty on interview or mail assignments will result in an automatic failing grade for the class.

Plagiarism. You will be asked to create questions and questionnaires. These must be your own work - not copied from surveys. For these assignments, copying from existing surveys (published or not) will be considered plagiarism and a violation of the honor code.

If you are sick or have any flu-like symptoms, do not come to class. Before class starts, send me an email explaining that you are sick. We’ll work out make-up times - even for tests. BUT, I am counting on you being honest about being sick!
HONOR CODE STANDARDS

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university.

Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university’s expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct. Students are responsible not only to adhere to the Honor Code requirement to be honest but also to assist other students in fulfilling their commitment to be honest. (complete version of the Academic Honesty Policy available at honorcode.byu.edu)

PREVENTING SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by the law and by Brigham Young University policy. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895 or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours), or http://www.ethicspoint.com; or contact the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, you should get in touch with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (1520 WSC). This office can evaluate your disability and assist me in arranging for reasonable accommodations. If approved accommodations are needed for tests, you must talk to me one week before each test so that we can work out appropriate arrangements.
POSSIBLE REFERENCE SOURCES FOR
ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS

NOTE: INTERNET SOURCES MAY BE USED, BUT YOUR RESEARCH GRADE WILL BE REDUCED
SIGNIFICANTLY IF MOST OR ALL SOURCES CITED AND USED ARE FROM THE INTERNET!!!!

JOURNALS
A. Sociology
American Journal of Sociology  HM 1 .A7
American Sociological Review  HM 1 .A75
British Journal of Sociology  HM 1 .B75
Community Development  HN 1 .C63
Demography  HB 881 .A1 D53
Pacific Sociological Review  HM 1 .P33
Rural Sociology  HT 401 .R8
Social Forces  HN 51 .S5
Social Problems  HN 1 .S58
Social Research  H 1 .S53
Social Science Research  H 1 .S613
Sociological Inquiry  HM 1 .S68
Sociological Quarterly  HM 1 .S69
Sociology of Education  L 11 .J76

B. Family
Journal of Family History  HQ 503 .J67
Journal of Family Issues  HQ 1 .J463
Journal of Marriage and the Family  HQ 1 .J48x

C. Aging
Annual review of Gerontology and Geriatrics  HQ 1060 .A55x
Generations  HQ 1060 .G38X
International Journal of Aging and Human Development  HQ 1060 .A33
Journal of Applied Gerontology  HQ 1060 .J66
Journal of Gerontology  HQ 1060 .J6
The Gerontologist  HQ 1060 .G4
Research on Aging  HQ 1060 .R48x

D. Other
Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science  H 1 .A4 (plus microfiche)
Health and Society  RA 421 .M55X
Policy Studies Journal  H 1 .P72
Social Policy  HN 51 .S54
The Public Interest  H 1 .P86

SOURCES OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
Current Population Reports (Bureau of the Census)  C 3 .186
Handbook of Labor Statistics  L 2 .3
Historical Statistics of the United States  HA 202 .A385
Gallup Polls
Statistical Abstract of the United States (annual)  HA 202 .A2s
World Almanac and Book of Facts (annual)  AY 67 .N5W7

ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND INDEXES
ERIC Resources in Education  LB 5 .XIE7 - (CD-ROM)
Social Sciences Index  AI 3 .S62
Sociological Abstracts  HM 1 .S67